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AUTHOR	Merkel-Keller, Claudia; Streeter-Scrupski, Sandra
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ABSTRACT

In 1992, adult education staff and adult literacy volunteer organizations developed 8 indicators of program quality to be used for evaluating adult basic education and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in New Jersey. Performance standards were developed to match the standards. An evaluation was conducted to determine how the indicators and the developed measures and standards are used for program improvement, curriculum and instruction, staff development, enhancement of student performance, and workforce preparation. Staff from each of the state's 225 programs were invited to participate. A self-study guide was developed so that adult education directors could evaluate their programs in the context of the indicators and standards, and this guide became the basis of the interview protocol used in interviews at 87 program sites. Findings are grouped with each of the eight indicators. The field data strongly suggest that the eight indicators of program quality and the ancillary measures and performance standards form the framework of most, if not all, adult education programs in the state. Program directors have been striving to make their programs more responsive to student needs and to adhere to sound management practices. Findings also highlight the efficiency and effectiveness of programs that are part of a coordinated service delivery network and those that offer a continuum of comprehensive services. Appendixes list the program sites, provide interview results, and present a discussion of performance measurement, reporting, and improvement systems. (Contains 20 references.) (SLD)

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ED 462 448

Summary Report

Indicators of Program Quality, Measures of Performance & Standards

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND ESL PROGRAMS IN NJ

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Summary Report

Indicators of Program Quality, Measures of Performance & Standards

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND ESL PROGRAMS IN NJ

1997

Leo Klagholz
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Barbara Anderson
Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

Arlene Roth
Director
Office of Specialized Populations

Maria Nuccetelli
Acting Assistant Commissioner
Division of Field Services

Report Prepared by:

Claudia Merkel-Keller
Sandra Streeter-Scrupski
Planning Associates
Adult Literacy Enhancement Center

Summary Report
Indicators of Program Quality, Measures of Performance & Standards
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND ESL PROGRAMS IN NJ

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"By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship."

Goal Six, National Education Goals

Background:

The New Jersey State Department of Education is providing leadership, technical assistance, policy and funding support, and accountability to adult education and literacy program providers in the state in order to support the federal effort to attain the sixth National Education Goal that all Americans will be literate by the year 2000. Despite America's preeminence as a world power and economic leader, the National Institute for Literacy points out that twenty million adult Americans lack the basic literacy skills which are necessary to be productive workers, full partners in their children's education, and citizens involved in building strong communities.

Trends from New Jersey parallel those witnessed at the national level.

- More than 1.5 million adults in New Jersey do not have high school diplomas.
- New Jersey embraces nearly 30,000 immigrants yearly, most of whom do not speak English and some who are not literate in their native language.
- Over 15,000 youth drop out of New Jersey's high schools each year.
- Approximately 60 percent of individuals at the lowest levels of literacy lack full-time employment as defined in the National Adult Literacy Survey.

The New Jersey State Department of Education in its leadership and capacity-building role has embraced the development of a state accountability, evaluation, and improvement system that is premised on *indicators of program quality, measures of performance and standards*. This flexible framework for systemic reform provides a mechanism for focusing on the results of investments in literacy and on improving the return on those investments.

This statewide system -- accountability, evaluation and improvement -- will allow New Jersey to build capacity for its adult education and literacy programs across the State by:

1. focusing on efforts to achieve not only local goals but state and national goals as well;
2. measuring progress by reviewing results and impact not process;
3. linking literacy to broader state goals that empower other state agencies to maximize resources, share information and streamline reporting in an effort to serve the client; and.
4. ensuring continuous improvement of programs that are effective and achieve the desired results, discontinuing those which don't work and modifying those which require alternative strategies for success.

Federal Role in Promoting Accountability:

The Adult Education Act (P.L. 100-297) established the federal role in supporting basic skills instruction to educationally disadvantaged adults through the funding of local instructional programs for adults in an array of areas including adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE) and English as a Second Language (ESL).

The Act also promotes quality in state and local programs through requirements for program evaluation and accountability. Amendments to the Act, embodied in the National Literacy Act of 1991, further required that program indicators be established by which state and local programs receiving federal funds could evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts.

The indicators of program quality can be used for:

Program Improvement: To promote the development of quality adult education programs.

Program Accountability: To help ensure local programs provide a consistent level and quality of instructional services.

Program Impact: To identify program and staff characteristics that correlate with quality of instructional services.

Public Policy: To demonstrate to other programs, legislators, policy makers and the general public the role and effectiveness of adult education programs.

New Jersey's Implementation of Program Quality Indicators, Measures and Standards:

In the winter of 1992, adult education program directors and staff, as well as adult literacy volunteer organization coordinators and literacy volunteers, in conjunction with personnel from the New Jersey State Department of Education, initiated the development and adoption phase of New Jersey's indicators of program quality. They also identified measures which would be used to determine the quantitative level of program performance.

The eight indicators of program quality which were validated and adopted are listed below:

Educational Gains

Indicator 1: Learners demonstrate progress toward attainment of basic skills competencies that support their educational needs and goals.

Indicator 2: Learners progress according to their abilities in the instructional program or complete educational program requirements that allow them to continue their education or training or achieve their personal educational goals.

Program Planning

Indicator 3: Based on a participatory planning process, the program develops, implements, evaluates and revises, as needed, written program goals.

Curriculum and Instruction

Indicator 4: The program has curriculum and instruction sensitive to individual student and group learning styles and the varying levels of student need.

Staff Development

Indicator 5: The program has a staff development process that considers the specific needs of its staff, offers opportunities for training in the skills necessary to provide quality instruction and for the utilization of skills learned.

Support Services

Indicator 6: The program identifies support service needs and the agencies which address these needs. provides information to students as needed. and promotes student access to these agencies through informal linkages with service providers as a means of enhancing student participation in the program.

Recruitment

Indicator 7: The program recruits the population in their service delivery area as identified in the Adult Education Act as needing literacy services.

Retention

Indicator 8: Students are encouraged to remain in the program long enough to meet their educational goal(s). The program has a plan which addresses retention and implements the plan as needed.

The next phase of the process involved establishing performance standards defining levels of acceptable attainment for each of the eight indicators. During the winter of 1993-94, representatives of the adult education community again came together in a developmental cycle to begin the process of establishing performance standards. A steering committee initiated the first drafts of the document, which detailed standards for each of the indicators.

Definitions:

The following set of definitions was used as the organizing rubric during the standards development phase:

Indicator: A quality indicator is a variable that reflects effective and efficient program performance.

Measure: A measure is defined as the data used to determine the quantitative level of performance.

Performance Standard: A performance standard defines a level of acceptable performance in terms of specific numeric criterion.

Evaluation: The process of gathering data for decision-making.

Process Evaluation (Formative Evaluation): Serves the day-to-day decision-making needs required to carry out a program. It provides feedback to the producers and managers of a program, so that they can monitor the operations and detect and predict potential problems in design or implementation.

Product Evaluation (Summative Evaluation): Serves to measure and interpret program attainments; it focuses on the extent to which goals had been achieved. Product evaluation may also include assessments during the course of the program.

Roundtables were hosted in 1993 to seek the input of the adult education community in New Jersey. Staff from each of the 225 programs funded through the New Jersey State Department of Education were invited to participate in discussions regarding the standards drafted by the steering committee of practitioners. Preliminary drafts were revised a number of times based on the suggestions received.

In the early spring of 1994, the performance standards document was put in a final draft form and mailed to all adult education directors and staff, as well as to adult literacy volunteer organization coordinators and literacy volunteers for their final review and critique.

Public hearings were held on the performance standards so that all interested educators had an opportunity to comment. After the public hearings were completed, the performance standards were shared with the New Jersey State Board of Education and with the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) prior to their formal submission to the United States Department of Education's Office of Adult and Vocational Education.

In summary, the development of indicators of program quality, measures of performance and standards for adult education programs mirrors the development of core curriculum

content standards which the State Board of Education has endorsed and which have become part of the new chapter of State Administrative Code entitled, *Standards for Student Achievement (N.J.A.C. 6:30-2.6).*

Rationale for the Study:

Adult Education has faced increasing demands to demonstrate effectiveness and value of the services and instruction offered. The effort at the national level to strengthen accountability requirements led to the development of program quality indictors to be used for program evaluation, accountability and improvement purposes. New Jersey mirrors the national trend and is faced with similar accountability demands at the state level. The indicators therefore serve the state quite naturally as an assessment tool to evaluate program effectiveness, to improve overall program quality, to make program funding decisions, and to identify technical assistance needs.

The New Jersey State Department of Education through the implementation of the *Indicators of Program Quality, Measures of Performance & Standards*, is now able to assess areas of program strength and weakness at the state level and can respond by adjusting its delivery system and technical assistance support to areas requiring improvement. These indicators represent a critical step in efforts to promote quality in programs that serve as the foundation for ensuring that every New Jersey citizen will have the necessary skills and competencies to become a contributing member in New Jersey's economy and a valued contributor to the nation's economic growth and development.

Recognizing the need to determine the degree to which New Jersey Adult Education Programs were moving forward in their implementation of the indicators, the State Director of Adult Education requested that a field-based study be conducted to determine how these indicators, measures and standards were utilized for the purposes of program improvement, curriculum and instruction, staff development, enhancement of student performance and workforce preparation.

Methodology:

An evaluation study was undertaken through the Office of Specialized Populations in cooperation with the Adult Literacy Enhancement Center (ALEC) at the Academy for Professional Development-Central in the late fall of 1996. It was determined that the focus of the field-based study would be Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs and English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs which had been funded during the 1996-97 program year. The express purpose of the study was to assess individual program

implementation of the Indicators of Program Quality, Measures of Performance & Standards for program improvement purposes at the district and state level. The study itself was not part of the State's monitoring process and no fiscal considerations or decisions were attached to the study. A total of 87 programs were visited.

Prior to the implementation of field visits, a self-study guide framed around the eight quality indicators was developed, reviewed and refined. Attention was focused on the guide's content validity. The self-study guide was prepared so that adult education directors would have a tool to use to review their local adult education programs in the context of the indicators. The self-study guide later served as the basis for the interview protocol which was used during on-site visits conducted by staff from *ALEC*. The self-study guide and interview protocol are provided in the Appendix to this report. The on-site visits consisted of interviews with the adult education director and appropriate teaching staff; review of student portfolios and records; as well as observation of on-going classes, if feasible.

In advance of the field visits, the State Director of Adult Education hosted three regional briefing sessions in October of 1996 to apprise the adult education community of the field-based evaluation study which was about to be initiated. The Director reinforced the rationale for the study and re-emphasized the fact that the findings of the study were not in any way connected to program monitoring or funding. These briefings allowed for a forum at which directors could discuss any concerns or issues which they wished to raise regarding the projected study or any other adult education related issues.

After the briefing sessions had been conducted, site-based field visits were scheduled. Over the course of the study, site visits during holiday periods, school vacations, and the weeks immediately preceding the due date for the *1997-98 Request for Proposal: Adult Basic Skills Grant Program (ABE) and Adult Secondary Completion (GED)* could not be arranged. Two staff from *ALEC* conducted the interviews and gathered the programmatic data. Data collection procedures were refined prior to implementation. An interview protocol was completed and additional post-interview field notes were prepared. Summary data from the interview protocol can be found in the Appendix. Ancillary programmatic data, recommendations and suggestions were also provided to the field staff during the course of the field visits.

The following sections of the report, *Focus on the Program*, detail:

1. intention and philosophy of the adult education program given the federal mandate through the National Literacy Act of 1991;

2. adults targeted and served through the provision of programs;

❸ what adult education programs looks like across the State; and

❹ staff and the administration of the program.

Focus on the Program: What is the intention of the program?

The National Literacy Act of 1991 (P.L. 102-73) provides support to the States to improve educational opportunities for adults who lack the level of literacy skills which are requisite to effective citizenship and productive employment. The Act (Sec. 311) also assists the states to expand and improve the current system for delivering adult education services including services to educationally disadvantaged adults. and to encourage the establishment of adult education programs that will--

❶ enable these adults to acquire the basic educational skills necessary for literate functioning;

❷ provide these adults with sufficient basic education to enable them to benefit from job training and retraining programs and obtain and retain productive employment so that they might more fully enjoy the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship: and

❸ enable adults to continue their education to at least the level of completion of secondary school.

Given the state's demographic profile. immigration both legal and illegal and in-migration data for New Jersey, it is clear that New Jersey has significant numbers of adults requiring adult education programs and services. These programs focus on: basic literacy services for adults whose skills are below the eighth grade level; services designed to prepare students to obtain a high school equivalency diploma and services for adults with limited English proficiency. Through the provision of these types of programs, adults can become full participants in the economic fabric of their communities and the State.

It is clear that all citizens must become viable and productive contributors to the economic well-being of the State but also they must be empowered to provide for the educational, emotional and physical needs of themselves and their families. Breaking the cycle of marginal functional literacy and illiteracy for these adults will assist in shattering the ties of intergenerational illiteracy and poverty. Adult programs coupled with transitional programs leading to gainful employment are the threshold to economic self-sufficiency and

to the decline in the need for public assistance and dependency for those adults who are not presently members of the workforce.

Focus on the Program: Whom does the program target and serve?

The purpose of the Adult Education Act is to improve educational opportunities for "adults who lack the level of literacy skills requisite to effective citizenship and productive employment." Adult education programs whether in basic skills, English as a second language, high school completion or citizenship are the stepping-stones to economic independence and self-sufficiency for adults most in need. Adults who qualify for participation in adult education programs:

1. are 16 years of age or are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance;
2. are not enrolled in secondary school;
3. lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable them to function effectively in society or who do not have a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education;
4. are not currently required to be enrolled in school; and
5. lack the mastery of basic skills resulting in an inability to speak, read, or write the English language which constitutes a substantial impairment of their ability to get or retain employment commensurate with their real ability, and thus are in need of programs to help eliminate such inability and raise the level of education of such individuals with a view to making them less likely to become dependent on others.

P.L. 102-73, Sec. 312

Adults enrolled in adult programs face many additional barriers to participation. While some may be employed, they in fact might have two marginal jobs and consequently have associated problems of finding appropriate child care and adequate personal time for class participation. The lack of transportation is another hardship often faced by students. This clientele may be additionally burdened by substance, spousal or sexual abuse; family problems; social issues; or health concerns.

The profile of an adult ESL student varies. While some may be well-educated, affluent and self-employed, other program participants are unemployed, confronting welfare issues and, in some cases, homelessness. In addition, adults may be immigrants or refugees who

must deal with the newly enacted immigration reforms and the ensuing concerns brought about by these reforms.

For non-native speakers of English, additional obstacles and barriers are faced by students since in some cases these adults are not literate or proficient in their native language. Learning English, when one has no functional grammar or syntax in one's native language, can be a daunting task. The problem is even more complex for native-born Americans who speak a language other than English in the home and are functionally illiterate in both English and their native language.

Research indicates that a portion of adults enrolled in programs may also have learning disabilities. Nightingale et al. (1991) estimate that between 20 and 30 percent of economically disadvantaged adults--and as many as 50 to 80 percent of ABE participants may be learning disabled. The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) results show that about a quarter of persons in the lowest skill level indicate that they have a disability. Although the incidence of learning disabilities appears quite significant from these data, experts do not agree on whether it is feasible, necessary or even desirable to distinguish between adults with learning disabilities and those adults who are low-literate. There is no consensus on the impact of learning disabilities on achievement in adult education programs.

Focus on the Program: What does the program look like across the state?

Adult education programs are implemented in various venues across the state. In some settings, both ABE and ESL programs are provided, depending on client need, and in other settings only ABE or ESL is offered. Programs vary from those totally integrated into settings such as a community learning center, adult high school, postsecondary institution, vocational technical school, etc., to programs which stand alone, are on the margin and generally ancillary to other programs provided by the sponsoring agency. Maintenance of the program may reflect the dedication and commitment of an adult director and his/her colleagues to the educational needs of the clients served by the program.

Adult education programs are offered through a wide variety of agencies including public schools, vocational technical schools, community colleges, educational service commissions, community-based organizations, labor unions and special agencies which serve clients with disabilities. These agencies for special needs clients typically include Easter Seals of NJ/Associations for Retarded Citizens (ARCs), rehabilitation centers and cerebral palsy centers. Programs may be offered in traditional school or college settings, as well as in churches, synagogues, libraries, community agencies and other social service

settings where access by the clients in need of the program services is facilitated by a convenient location. Some program delivery sites are well-equipped while others are hampered by facilities which are older and less well maintained. In some classes space constraints and overcrowding were issues.

The adult education program overall is a program that is operated on the margin in most sites. Adult education may not always be in concert with the mission of the sponsoring agency. Space availability during the day may conflict with the operation of other day programs. Even though this is the case, there seem to be significant contributions by sponsoring agencies. These in-kind contributions include classroom space, supplies, secretarial assistance, postage, printing, janitorial support, and salaries for security guards in some of the inner-city locations.

It appears to be more beneficial to an adult education program to be integrated into a larger functioning entity such as a community learning center, adult high school, postsecondary institution or vocational technical school, etc. Resources can be leveraged and there may be more options and opportunities available for the students who participate in the program. Adult education programs must connect to a greater universe of support and job networking in order for these programs to be considered effective. Students, who are not presently employed, must be helped to transitional bridge programs and training programs which can then lead to jobs and the elimination of the need for public assistance.

In some sites, new computer technology is available for student use; however, this is not true in most cases. Space for classes as well as storage for materials and books is also an issue for most programs, with related problems of centralized recordkeeping and maintenance of files.

ABE and ESL services may be offered during the day, and/or afternoon and/or evening depending on the size and scope of the program. In some cases, Saturday classes and summer programs have also been provided at a satellite site. Some programs are full-time day programs delivered at learning centers but the greater majority of the programs are operated on a part-time basis. While program hours vary across the state, typically, programs are offered in the evenings. Most programs offer at least the minimum number of hours called for in the grant guidelines. While funding may be one of the issues impacting program delivery, other issues such as staffing, security, availability of substitute teachers, transportation, child care and the provision of counseling services are also of concern.

It should also be noted that in addition to those grant funded ABE and ESL programs which are provided across the state, sites might also be offering programs such as Adult Secondary Completion/GED, GED Testing Centers, and Evening Schools for Foreign

Born Residents (EFB). These additional programs are either supported through state funds or are fee-driven. Sites also provided supplementary ABE and ESL programs supported through other funding sources.

Focus on the Program: Staff and administration of the program

Directors of local adult programs may have this program responsibility on a full-time basis while others manage additional federal and/or state grants, alternative education and community education programs. Likewise, staff who teach in the program may have full-time jobs during the day if they teach at night or have other part-time supplementary jobs to enhance their teaching salary. Teachers in the adult program may extend themselves beyond their educational roles to function as counselors, mentors and problem-solvers for students who are in their classes. It is not unusual to hear of staff who have assisted their students in finding jobs, obtaining drivers' licenses, working through immigration issues and other problems. In some cases, staff even transport students to and from class so that their students can save on transportation costs.

Staff hold certification in a wide variety of areas ancillary to adult education. Teachers in adult education programs range from full-time to part-time with a majority of staff employed in a part-time capacity. Due to part-time status, variation also exists in the benefits received by part-time teaching staff. Personal commitments to primary jobs, families, continuing education, etc. may influence the ability of part-time staff to participate in adult education-related staff development opportunities. The part-time status of adult education staff has made professional development among teachers a major challenge for the state and for local adult education programs.

Adult education programs also rely on volunteers to provide program support. Volunteers in the program are used mostly as tutors. While programs may employ full-time counselors, the bulk of adult education programs rely upon counseling staff from other programs; part-time counseling staff supported through adult education programs are available, albeit inconsistently, to program participants.

Results:

Educational Gains

Indicator 1: Learners demonstrate progress toward attainment of basic skills competencies that support their educational needs and goals.

Findings:

Data from the study indicate that students in the ABE and ESL programs are routinely assessed prior to or upon entry into the program within the first ten hours of enrollment. In most cases, students were assessed at the time of their registration for the program in order to determine appropriate placement. A number of different tests are used for assessment, ranging from a wide variety of informal reading inventories for Level I ABE students such as the Slossen, the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) and the Adult Basic Learning Exam (ABLE) to the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) for Level II and Level III ABE students. Almost universally, the New York State Placement Test (NYS Place) is used for entry level assessment for ESL students although one program reported use of the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) and another indicated their use of the Ullman ESL Achievement Test for Beginning ESL Students. Curricula may not be aligned with assessment results despite the use of appropriate testing and assessment practices.

Directors who utilized computer-based recordkeeping software were more likely to have immediate access to student achievement, enrollment and other demographic data for reporting and recordkeeping purposes. A variety of software is currently used across the state ranging from commercially developed products to software designed by local agency personnel.

Approximately 79 percent of the programs are complying with the reassessment requirement for their students after 50 hours of class participation. Some directors indicated that the concern is not with reassessment after 50 hours but indeed with retention of their students to that level of attendance. Program directors indicated that they felt that their students were making progress within level after program participation. Program directors' comments were supplemented by discussions with teachers and program staff who attested to the fact that they had noted progress, improvement and gains in computation, communication and life skill competencies. However, data to accurately assess the progress was not available with any degree of consistency.

Directors and staff indicated that 60 or 75 percent improvement was high but attainable if they could sustain the participation of their students. Only three program directors, actually calculated the percent of growth of their students from the pre-test experience to the post-test experience. It was noted that, depending upon level and where a student was placed at the beginning of the program, dramatic results might be achieved even though this achievement gain was less than 60 percent or 75 percent. For example, if a barely functionally literate Level I student could exit the class being able to write his or her name,

recognize simple words and produce simple sentences this might be a noteworthy gain yet falling below an anticipated percentage.

Reviewing student records, it is clear that the individualized educational plans contained in portfolios form the cornerstone for an individual's programmatic instruction. Portfolios varied in scope, rigor, quality and utility with the contents being non-uniform from program to program. Most contained, however, student biographical information, attendance data, standardized test data and other performance measures. When available, portfolios were enhanced by individual student needs assessment data, student plans, and multi-faceted examples of student work including writing samples and other performance-based or authentic assessments, student comments and feedback relative to program participation. These types of data were generally the exception rather than the rule.

Some program directors developed individual skill specific folders for each level of their program. For example, one ABE program had three unique color-coded portfolio jackets detailing a hierarchy of skills to be mastered. The same was true for the ABE program. Some portfolio folders also contained information which would later be useful to program directors in reporting student outcome data to their local boards or to the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Recommendations:

1. Establish and utilize portfolios detailing student biographic information, skill needs, test information and examples of student work.
2. Strive toward the implementation of computerized recordkeeping to allow for standardized reporting and analysis of administrative data.
3. Improve procedures and documentation of data to measure student progress and achievement.
4. Align local program tests to program curriculum.

Educational Gains

Indicator 2: Learners progress according to their abilities in the instructional program or complete program educational requirements that allow them to continue their education or training or achieve their personal educational goals.

Findings:

Results of discussions with program directors and staff and a review of data from student portfolios indicated that students are making progress and demonstrating gains as a result of program participation. Categorically, directors were emphatic in their assertion that the program has benefited their students. Students who had participated in the program for at least 50 hours of instruction progressed within level. Students also moved from one level to the next especially from Level II to Level III. It should be noted that progress from Level I to Level II within a program year may be difficult to achieve since a great majority of the students in this level are at the very lowest level of literacy or academic achievement.

If students participated in the program for at least 100 hours, their gains were more noteworthy according to program directors. Mikulecky and Lloyd (1993) also point out that 100 hours plus of instruction and program participation are needed for adult learners to achieve what they define to be a one-year gain in reading level ability. Others (Venezky et al. 1993) challenge this view indicating that it is difficult to document a relationship between hours of instruction and gains. Moore and Stavrianos (1993) point out that data from a recent national evaluation of Even Start support the notion that adults gain in literacy as hours of instruction increase. Interestingly, these gains seem to occur at a slower pace as the hours of instruction increase. The data from the Even Start study support the *time on task* (*the more you do something the better you will be at it)* adage and concur with conventional pedagogical wisdom, practice and intuition.

With the exception of ABE programs provided to students who were developmentally disabled in sheltered workshops or adults who may have special needs, directors felt that their students moved from level to level as outlined in the interview protocol; however, only three had culled the data and actually analyzed the percentage of movement. Adults who did not show improvement within Level I after 50 hours tended to reduce the overall percentage showing gain. In the case of ESL students, directors indicated reluctance of students to move to the next level, even though their test scores and overall achievement would have warranted progress, since they had formed social ties with fellow students and their families.

With respect to the program's ability to meet students' individual personal educational goals, directors and staff were emphatic that students were meeting if not exceeding their own individually stated goals and objectives, as modest in some cases as they might be.

Programs were attentive to the provision of information to students on: planning for their careers; expectations for further vocational training; knowledge of workplace activities; and, integration of school and workplace learning and career interests. While some program directors have attempted significant linkages to vocational skill training programs

for their students once they had completed the ABE program, not all are doing this. Many need to strengthen efforts in these areas and have requested assistance in developing strategies for networking with other service providers, school and agencies in their areas. It is critical to connect students to employment as part of any adult education program. Some of these stepping-stone opportunities have resulted in skilled jobs for these students in such fields as medical transcription and other computer-related employment.

One of the goals of any adult education program is clearly further credentialing, future employment or further education and training. Adult education programs are the natural bridge from illiteracy, welfare dependency, and unemployment to productive participation in society.

Recommendations:

1. Utilize student assessment data to measure improvements in student achievement.
2. Strengthen the integration of school and workplace learning and develop bridges and transitional programs from local adult education programs to programs which will lead to further credentialing, future employment or further education and training.
3. Coordinate with other local and county service providers including other social service agencies, vocational technical schools, the Work Investment Boards (WIBs) and other community-based organizations.

Program Planning

Indicator 3: Based on a participatory planning process, the program develops, implements, evaluates and revises, as needed, written program goals.

Findings:

A review of the planning documents supplemented by discussions with program directors and their staff revealed that most directors utilized their state approved grant award as their formal planning document. In very few instances were other comprehensive plans or strategic plans available which incorporated adult education programs into a more holistic view for the sponsoring agency. A few larger community-based organizations deriving funding from multiple government, state and/or private foundations and agencies utilized a more rigorous and comprehensive planning process which outlined an organizational mission statement, philosophy, goals and objectives and strategies to accomplish the stated goals. In those cases, the state-funded adult education programs were subsumed in the overarching mission of the organization. In these cases the resources of the organization were also utilized to support the needs of adult students enrolled in either ABE or ESL programs. These ancillary services included counseling and other social services support, immigration information and job counseling and placement assistance.

When adult education programs are intertwined into the fabric of a larger organizational entity, the overall program services are more comprehensive and are more supportive of student needs. In some cases, adult directors reported that the adult education programs were not priority programs in the sponsoring agencies. On the other hand, some of these agencies provided strong financial support and organizational commitment to adult programs through, for example, purchasing of computers, setting up learning labs and/or serving as a site for the One-Stop Career Centers. If adult programs are a part of an adult high school, vocational school, postsecondary institution, library, community learning center, or other service provider, etc. there generally is greater support and commitment to the programs and consequently to the students. The small adult education programs serving 50 to 75 students which were independent of any other program connection were operational with commitment of that particular program director to serving the needs of this population.

Most programs complied with the state requirement of maintenance of an advisory council and sought input from the council on a regular basis. In a few cases, programs did not have a formal advisory council. Large community-based organizations utilized their boards of directors or trustees for advice and input to their programs. For small programs having a part-time staff of ten or less, a great reliance was placed on informal meetings and discussions to review program content, delivery and student issues.

Program directors also varied in their approaches to gathering feedback from other sources additional to their advisory councils. Some program directors had rather comprehensive student course evaluations in place. In other cases, formal input from students as to their reactions to the program was non-existent. Though it should be said that individual teaching staff members indicated that they always were in touch with the

needs of their students and consequently this informal data is certainly available for planning purposes.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a formal, integrated plan in order to deliver a more cohesive and comprehensive program that allows for a continuum of services for adult education students who have completed program requirements and are ready to move to employment or a more advanced level of education or vocational training.

2. Create local task forces, advisory councils, or sub-committees of larger groups, e.g., Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), in order to develop a common vision among coordinating agencies and service providers.

Curriculum and Instruction

Indicator 4: The program has curriculum and instruction sensitive to individual student and group learning styles and the varying levels of student need.

Findings:

Data from the individual student portfolios which document student skill levels and educational needs form the foundation upon which to base delivery of curriculum and instruction. The focus of instruction centers around student needs and is frequently fine-tuned to respond to immediate and emerging student issues. In that sense the curriculum responds to life skill and employability issues.

Programs have a formal curriculum guide in place or are using either or both of the two state-developed curricula, *Adult Basic Skills Curriculum Guide (1988) and Curriculum Guide for English as a Second Language Programs and Evening Schools for Foreign Born Residents (1988)*, as their framework(s). Teaching staff exercise flexibility and innovation in supplementing either locally developed guides or the state guides with materials of their own development or choosing. Teachers have found useful and practical tools amidst the myriad of materials produced by national text publishers. Where resources permit, teaching staff are using the computer as a tool to reinforce basic skills or in the teaching of English.

Teaching staff face many additional pedagogical obstacles in working with adult students. Adults may manifest some additional learning or developmental disability which impacts their ability to learn. Providing appropriate educational strategies for these adults is complex in the context of a class. Staff in the ESL program face the additional challenge of immigrant students coming from many different language backgrounds, in addition to non-literacy of these students in their native languages. Staff must then provide instruction in a multi-level classroom setting.

Program staff also indicated that volunteers supported their program and these volunteers provided additional tutoring support and time to students to supplement their classroom learning.

Recommendations:

1. Expand utilization of curriculum and approaches to instruction in the multi-level classroom.
2. Review recent adult education curricula and materials that will enhance instruction and promote student learning. [Materials are available at the Adult Literacy Enhancement Center (ALEC).]

Staff Development

Indicator 5: The program has a staff development process that considers the specific needs of its staff, offers opportunities for training in the skills necessary to provide quality instruction and for the utilization of skills learned.

Findings:

Based on the interview data, staff development was an area which directors and their staff viewed as vital in terms of continual professional development and renewal. Staff development activities, including preservice and inservice opportunities, were included in the overall program plan of operation but not formally linked to program improvement and evaluation activities. In most cases, either a formal or informal planning mechanism existed for the articulation of staff professional development needs.

Although formal and informal planning for professional development had taken place, it became clear that staff development was an area of great need. Some directors and teachers indicated that they participated in staff meetings and in-service training provided in-house by their school district or respective agency. Participation of directors and staff in externally provided seminars, workshops and training sessions was marginal. There were many reasons cited for lack of participation. Principal among these is the fact that many adult education staff are part-time staff who hold full-time jobs in the daytime and yet still make the commitment to teach two to three times per week. Their ability to commit another evening or Saturday to attend a training session in their words was additionally hampered by the driving time and location of the training opportunities. They felt much more inclined toward attending training sessions either on-site or in regional locations.

From an administrative standpoint, directors were also reluctant to extend professional time to their staff to attend a seminar since this would necessitate either canceling class or finding a substitute for that class. Directors advised that it was very difficult to find substitute teachers for adult programs, particularly for the ESL program. Some directors, however, from larger adult education programs have been very supportive of their staff and have facilitated their attendance at numerous training activities including those sponsored by the Adult Literacy Enhancement Center. Directors indicated that they welcomed the inclusion of federal dollars targeted to staff development in the 1997-1998 Request for Proposals for the Adult Basic Skills Grant Program.

Directors who participated in the study had a formal staff performance appraisal system in place and indicated that they observed staff at least once per year if not more. In most cases, administrators and staff operate on a collegial and informal basis. Staff indicated that the program administrator made numerous visits to respective classes either to offer guidance or to counsel students throughout the year. These visits were viewed to be supportive and not obtrusive or negative.

Recommendations:

1. Involve staff in the identification and prioritization of professional development training needs.

2. Explore alternatives for the provision of staff development and training such as instructional television (ITV), computer linkages, internet access, web sites and chat rooms.

3. Link staff development activities with program evaluation and improvement.

4. Establish a system to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for staff.

5. Provide local adult program staff with opportunities to interact and to exchange knowledge with colleagues in the field.

6. Utilize staff development funds to enhance areas such as: working with adults with disabilities, family literacy, life and employability skills, citizenship preparation, integrating technology into the classroom, and computerized recordkeeping.

Support Services

Indicator 6: The program identifies support service needs and the agencies which address these needs, provides information to students as needed, and promotes student access to these agencies through informal linkages with service providers as a means of enhancing student participation in the program.

Findings:

As has been discussed previously, adults enrolled in ABE and ESL programs face many barriers to participation including the need for child care, counseling and transportation. While some may be employed, they in fact might have two marginal jobs and consequently have associated problems of finding appropriate child care and adequate personal time for class participation. The lack of transportation is another hardship faced by students. Program staff have indicated that in some cases they even pick up and drop off their students to ease the lack of transportation burden.

Program participants are often additionally burdened by substance, spousal or sexual abuse; family problems; social issues; or health concerns. As discussed earlier, a large number of program participants are not employed and consequently they confront welfare issues and in some cases homelessness. Other adults are immigrants or refugees who must deal with the newly enacted immigration reforms and the ensuing concerns brought about by these reforms.

Many adults enrolled in programs may also have learning disabilities. Nightingale et al. (1991) estimate that between 20 and 30 percent of economically disadvantaged adults--and as many as 50 to 80 percent of ABE participants--may be learning disabled.

Given the multi-dimensional problems faced by students in adult programs, the provision of support services is critical in order to sustain class participation. The identification of appropriate support services providers can be more easily accomplished through coordination and networking. Directors may have worked in the adult program in their community for many years and consequently they have made extensive formal and informal contacts throughout the community with other agencies and social service providers. In most cases, staff are also equipped to provide assistance and guidance to students in terms of referrals to agencies in the community which would help to address their needs.

Directors who could offer additional support services, such as counseling, child care, health services, or legal information, to their students either on-site or through referrals to other resources, felt that they were in a better position to retain students in their programs.

Recommendations:

1. Identify appropriate support service providers for program participants through coordination and networking . *(The need for child care, counseling and transportation is especially critical to program participation.)*
2. Provide increased counseling services to students in the program.
3. Identify other service providers in the area with whom formal and informal agreements can be structured to leverage resources and support for students in need.
4. Identify job opportunities as well as additional training and/or educational opportunities for post program participation.

Recruitment

Indicator 7: The program recruits the population in their service delivery area as identified in the Adult Education Act as needing literacy services.

Findings:

Recruitment to the program does not seem to be an issue based on the findings of the study. Programs may operate on an open entry/open exist basis. Generally, formal brochures are mailed to the resident community two to three times per year. These formal mailings are supplemented by announcements posted throughout the community and neighboring communities, public cable spots, flyers sent home with students and posted in workplaces. Sometimes these announcements and flyers are made and/or printed in languages other than English to reach the targeted clientele. Often program information is provided informally through word of mouth by current or previous program participants.

In some communities the program serves students from neighboring towns given the location of the program and the hours the program is offered. Directors have indicated that programs may have waiting lists and cannot accommodate all of the potential students who are interested in participating in the program. This is especially true of ESL programs.

While programs at present may not target special recruitment efforts to welfare recipients, welfare reform is increasingly linking recipients with adult education programs and programs providing GED attainment through increased networking and cooperation. It is estimated that about two-thirds of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients in Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) programs require basic skills training before moving into the work force (Martinson and Friedlander, 1994).

Recommendations:

1. Prepare recruitment strategies targeted to the different populations of students served by the local adult education program.
2. Prepare recruitment materials which can be used with area employers to generate interest in the local workplace literacy program.
3. Prepare recruitment strategies and materials that target welfare recipients.

Retention

Indicator 8: Students are encouraged to remain in the program long enough to meet their educational goal(s). The program has a plan which addresses retention and implements the plan as needed.

Findings:

Retention is a problem faced by adult education program directors. Data from this study support national trends which suggest that adults do not stay in adult education programs very long. As Moore and Stavrianos (1995) point out, the median exposure is about 60 hours of instruction over a period of 24 weeks with ESL students having a generally higher rate of program participation. ESL clients on the average accumulate substantially more hours of instruction.

There are many factors which influence participation and retention in adult education programs. These factors include program characteristics, participant characteristics and participant motivation.

Moore and Stavrianos also (1995) report that lower drop-out rates tend to occur in programs that:

- offer a broad array of support services and emphasize integration of services with other agencies.
- devote relatively few resources to client outreach and recruitment.
- have a moderate or low cost per client seat hour.
- are not extremely large as measured by the number of clients they serve.

That little outreach should reduce drop-out rates is at first surprising, since these factors suggest a non-intensive intervention. Programs that emphasize client outreach and recruitment, however, may enroll less interested clients, who would in turn be more likely to drop out (Moore and Stavrianos, 1995).

In addition it should be pointed out that program retention is enhanced by the availability of support services noted previously, such as child-care, transportation and counseling. Programs may also use college students or high school honor students as volunteer tutors who work with adult students for an hour before class either on a one-on-one basis or in small groups. Directors indicated that having a wider array of options for class hours of instruction would enhance student participation. **Day-time programs rather than evening programs also seem to be related to more persistent participation.** Participation in programs is also related to socioeconomic, demographic and educational variables as well as to opportunities for further education and training leading to employment.

Motivation of adult students is another variable to participation. Motivational factors enhancing participation include educational advancement, self-development and economic self-sufficiency and improvement.

Recommendations:

1. Offer a broad array of support services to students, either on-site or through coordination with other resources.
2. Emphasize integration of services with other agencies.
3. Offer a wide variety of options in terms of class hours of instruction (i.e. day, evening and Saturday classes).
4. Connect completion of adult training to future employment opportunities or to further education and training.
5. Establish structured policies and requirements regarding student attendance and commitment.

Conclusions:

The field data strongly suggest that the eight indicators of program quality and the ancillary measures and performance standards form the framework of most, if not all, adult education programs in the state. The self-study dimension of this field-based program review allowed for program directors and their staffs to review individual programs using the eight quality indicators as a template against which to measure their individual program components, delivery of services, success and impact on the clients and overall achievement of their mission and program goals. Even though implementation of these indicators varies, it is clear that program directors have been striving to make their programs more responsive to student needs and to adhere to sound management practices in attempts to improve the overall quality of programs for students. The conclusions of the study which are delineated below support and are reflective of national trends (see Appendix C).

1. Programs that are part of a coordinated service delivery network and those which offer a continuum of comprehensive services are more effective and efficient than smaller programs which are unable to offer the wide range and scope of services necessary to meet the varied and often complex needs of adult students.

❷ Adult education program directors need to strengthen efforts to coordinate with agencies such as Workforce Investment Boards (WIBS), One-Stop Career Centers, and local or county welfare and workforce development service providers to ensure more comprehensive results-oriented services.

❸ Comprehensive planning in a formal, integrated manner, consisting of an organizational mission statement, philosophy, goals and objectives and strategies to accomplish the stated goals, is necessary in order to ensure the most successful delivery of coordinated services.

❹ Improvements are necessary in data collection methods, data analysis and in the quality of program data that are obtained in order to demonstrate program results, particularly progress and gains in student achievement.

❺ Instruction must include curricula which place a greater emphasis upon career information, employability skills and workforce development to prepare students for employment and occupational success, more advanced levels of education or vocational training.

❻ A wide range of options in available hours for classroom instruction, especially daytime hours, should be offered to assist students in meeting their educational goals. Daytime instruction seems to be related to increased and persistent participation and retention in adult education programs.

❼ Directors should explore new technologies for program delivery, including distance learning, state-of-the-art software, and computer labs for strengthening students' computer literacy skills, immediate access to current information, and for instructional purposes.

❽ Local program staff development efforts and funds should be targeted to training designed to improve student retention, achievement and performance, and should focus upon areas such as family literacy, adults with disabilities, life and employability skills, citizenship preparation, integrating technology into the classroom and computerized recordkeeping.

These conclusions support the initial phase of a restructured delivery system for adult education that has been introduced through the 1997-98 Adult Basic Skills Request for Proposal (RFP). The new guidelines strive to eliminate the fragmentation that has been evident for many years in adult programs. Research has indicated that on a national level, as well as in New Jersey, adult education programs have traditionally been provided in a

fragmented manner, and that this fragmentation has adversely impacted results. The focus of this RFP system is on the provision of a continuum of comprehensive adult education programs and services that: integrates essential components; coordinates activities with other state, federal and local efforts, such as School-to-Work, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), welfare reform efforts, the One-Stop Career System network; fosters the use of technology; and encourages partnerships with business and industry.

Appendix A: Program Sites Visited
1996-1997

County	*LEA*	*Agency*	*Program*
1	120	Atlantic County Vocational	ABE & ESL
1	4180	Pleasantville	ABE & ESL
2	4019	Atlantic Community College	ESL
3	285	Bergen County Special Services	ABE
3	290	Bergen County Vocational	ABE & ESL
3	1370	Englewood	ABE & ESL
3	1450	Fair Lawn	ABE & ESL
3	1760	Glen Rock	ESL
4	4021	Bergen Community College	ABE & ESL
4	6011	Associated Craftsmen/Easter Seals	ABE
5	4050	Pemberton	ABE
5	4320	Rancocas Valley Regional	ABE & ESL
7	390	Black Horse Pike Regional	ABE
7	680	Camden	ABE & ESL
7	4060	Pennsauken Township	ABE
8	4007	Camden County College	ABE
9	720	Cape May County Vocational	ABE & ESL
9	5790	Wildwood	ABE & ESL
11	540	Bridgeton	ABE & ESL
11	5390	Vineland	ABE & ESL
12	3054	Cumberland Rehabilitation Center	ABE
13	660	Caldwell-West Caldwell	ABE & ESL
13	1210	East Orange	ABE & ESL
13	1387	Essex County Education Services	ESL
13	1390	Essex County Vocational	ABE & ESL
13	2330	Irvington Township	ABE & ESL
13	3570	Newark	ABE & ESL
13	3880	Orange	ESL
13	4900	South Orange-Maplewood	ABE & ESL
14	4022	Essex County College	ABE
14	6016	First Occupational Center	ABE
14	6022	Catholic Community Services	ESL
14	6137	Focus Newark, Inc.	ABE & ESL
14	6231	Jewish Vocational Services	ABE & ESL
16	4022	Gloucester County College	ABE & ESL
17	2210	Hoboken	ABE & ESL
17	2390	Jersey City	ABE & ESL
17	4730	Secaucus	ABE & ESL

County	*LEA*	*Agency*	*Program*
17	5240	Union City	ABE & ESL
18	2003	International Institute	ESL
18	6257	ILGWU NJ Region	ESL
19	2305	Hunterdon County Educational Services	ABE & ESL
21	1245	East Windsor Regional	ABE & ESL
21	1950	Hamilton Township	ABE & ESL
21	5715	West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional	ESL
22	4023	College of New Jersey	ABE & ESL
22	4024	Mercer County Community College	ABE
22	6014	Princeton YWCA	ESL
23	1170	East Brunswick	ABE & ESL
23	1290	Edison	ABE & ESL
23	3530	New Brunswick	ABE & ESL
23	4090	Perth Amboy	ABE & ESL
23	4860	South Brunswick	ABE & ESL
23	4910	South Plainfield	ABE & ESL
23	4920	South River	ABE & ESL
23	5850	Woodbridge	ABE & ESL
24	4031	Rutgers University	ESL
24	6017	Raritan Valley Workshop/Easter Seals	ABE
25	100	Asbury Park	ABE & ESL
25	3255	Monmouth-Ocean Educational Services	ABE & ESL
25	3260	Monmouth County Vocational	ABE & ESL
26	3067	Sephardic Russian Resettlement	ESL
26	3068	Cerebral Palsy-Monmouth & Ocean	ABE
26	4008	Brookdale Community College	ABE & ESL
27	3365	Morris County Vocational	ABE & ESL
27	3370	Morris Hills Regional	ESL
27	3385	Morristown	ESL
27	3950	Parsippany-Troy Hills	ABE & ESL
29	530	Brick	ABE & ESL
29	770	Central Regional	ABE & ESL
29	2520	Lakewood	ABE & ESL
29	5190	Toms River Regional	ABE & ESL
31	3970	Passaic	ABE & ESL
31	3995	Passaic County Vocational	ABE & ESL
31	4010	Paterson	ABE & ESL
34	3036	ARC of Salem	ABE
35	1610	Franklin	ABE
36	6028	Jointure for Community Adult Ed.	ABE & ESL
38	4010	Sussex County Community College	ABE & ESL
38	6011	Highlands Workshop/Easter Seals	ABE
39	1320	Elizabeth	ABE & ESL

County	*LEA*	*Agency*	*Program*
39	4160	Plainfield	ABE & ESL
39	4290	Rahway	ABE & ESL
39	4540	Roselle	ABE
39	4550	Roselle Park	ESL
41	5460	Warren County Vocational	ABE & ESL
42	4040	Warren County Community	ESL

Number of Programs Offering both ABE and ESL	*56*
Number of Programs Offering ABE only	*16*
Number of Programs Offering ESL only	*15*
Total Number of Programs Visited	*87*

Appendix B: Interview Responses
Self-Study Guide
Indicators of Program Quality, Measures of Performance and Standards
1996-1997

Indicator 1: Learners demonstrate progress toward attainment of basic skill competencies that support their educational needs and goals.

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

1.1 Do you have standardized test score gains for each Level II and Level III student in a portfolio?

Yes	*70*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*14*

1.1.1 Are all Students assessed with a state-approved standardized reading comprehension test within ten hours of enrollment?

Yes	*70*
No	*1*
Unable to Ascertain	*16*

1.1.2 Are all students reassessed on a standardized reading comprehension test after being in attendance for 50 hours of instruction?

Yes	*67*
No	*2*
Unable to Ascertain	*18*

1.1.3 Do 60 percent of the students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction show the equivalent of a six-month gain expressed as a scaled-score equivalent on a standardized reading comprehension test?

Yes	*45*
No	*9*
Unable to Ascertain	*33*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

1.2 Do you have informal reading inventory results, pre-post, for each Level I student in a portfolio?

Yes	*66*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*16*

1.2.1 Are all students assessed with an informal reading inventory within ten hours of enrollment?

Yes	*69*
No	*4*
Unable to Ascertain	*14*

1.2.2 Does documentation exist relative to the achievement of an individual stated objective or growth on an informal reading inventory after a student has been in attendance for 50 hours of instruction?

Yes	*65*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*19*

1.2.3 For those students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction, do 60 percent show either gain on an informal reading inventory or attainment of some individual stated objective?

Yes	*57*
No	*6*
Unable to Ascertain	*24*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

1.3 Do you have placement test scores for each ESL student in a portfolio?

Yes	*71*
No	*-*
Unable to Ascertain	*16*

1.3.1 Are all ESL students assessed with a state-approved placement test within ten hours of enrollment (contact)?

Yes	*68*
No	*1*
Unable to Ascertain	*18*

1.3.2 Does documentation exist relative to the achievement of a personal instructional objective for each student in attendance for 50 hours of instruction?

Yes	*65*
No	*2*
Unable to Ascertain	*20*

1.3.3 For those students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction, do 75 percent report the achievement of a personal instructional objective?

Yes	*55*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*27*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

1.4 Do you have teacher reported gains and improvements in computation and/or communication and/or life skill competencies (employability skills) in a portfolio for each student?

Yes	*71*
No	*4*
Unable to Ascertain	*12*

1.4.1 Does documentation exist relative to gains and improvements in computation and/or communication and/or life skill competencies as evidenced by teacher notation on educational plans for all students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction?

Yes	*70*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*14*

1.4.2 For those students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction, do 75 percent show gains and improvement in computation and/or communication and/or life skill competencies as evidenced by teacher documentation on educational plans?

Yes	*60*
No	*9*
Unable to Ascertain	*18*

1.4.3 Do you have documentation available for each student in a portfolio which relates growth in computation and/or communication and/or life skill competencies (employability skills) to a student's career goals/school-to-work transition?

Yes	*68*
No	*4*
Unable to Ascertain	*15*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

1.5 Do you have individual student goals, skill needs, student comments and feedback and examples of student work in a portfolio for each student?

Yes	*81*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*3*

1.5.1 Does the educational plan reflect student goals and identify student skill needs based upon assessment?

Yes	*81*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*3*

1.5.2 Are examples of student work maintained in a student folder?

Yes	*77*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*7*

1.5.3 Are student comments and feedback related to program participation and gains included in the student folder when available?

Yes	*69*
No	*9*
Unable to Ascertain	*9*

Indicator 2: Learners progress according to their abilities in the instructional program or complete program educational requirements that allow them to continue their education or training or achieve their personal educational goals.

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

2.1 Do you have evidence of students' advancement to a higher level of skill or competency in the adult education program?

Yes	*78*
No	*1*
Unable to Ascertain	*8*

2.1.1 Does documentation exist relative to the improvement of skills for all Level I students, including special needs students, in attendance for 50 hours of instruction in Level I programs as evidenced by educational plans?

Yes	*75*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*9*

2.1.2 For Level I students, including special needs students, in attendance for 50 hours of instruction in Level I programs, do 40 percent show improvement of skills as evidenced by their educational plan?

Yes	*62*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*20*

2.1.3 For Level I students, with the exception of special needs students, do an additional ten percent move to Level II?

Yes	*54*
No	*6*
Unable to Ascertain	*27*

2.1.4 Does documentation exist relative to the improvement of skills for all Level II students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction in Level II programs as measured by performance on an approved test?

Yes	*72*
No	*4*
Unable to Ascertain	*11*

2.1.5 For Level II students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction, do 40 percent show improvement of skills within Level II as measured by performance on an approved test?

Yes	*59*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*23*

2.1.6 Do an additional ten percent of Level II students move to Level III?

Yes	*55*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*27*

2.1.7 Does your program provide information to students on:

- ☐ planning for their careers;
- ☐ expectations for further vocational training;
- ☐ knowledge of workplace activities; and,
- ☐ integration of school and workplace learning and career interests?

Yes	*79*
No	*-*
Unable to Ascertain	*8*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

2.2 Do you have evidence that students are attaining stated personal educational goals?

Yes	*76*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*8*

2.2.1 Does documentation exist relative to the achievement of a stated personal objective as part of a long-range educational goal for each student in attendance for 50 hours of instruction?

Yes	*68*
No	*2*
Unable to Ascertain	*17*

2.2.2 For those students in attendance for 50 hours of instruction, do 75 percent achieve a stated personal objective as part of their long-range educational goal?

Yes	*61*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*21*

Indicator 3: Based on a participatory planning process, the program develops, implements, evaluates and revises, as needed, written program goals.

MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE

3.1 Do you have a planning document that specifies program goals and objectives and is regularly reviewed and revised at least once each year?

Yes	*81*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*3*

3.2 Is your program open to community input on planning through mechanisms such as an advisory board, staff meetings or comments, student questionnaires or public hearings?

Yes	*77*
No	*4*
Unable to Ascertain	*6*

3.3 As funding constraints permit, does your program plan respond to and address community needs and priorities regarding location of classes, skills taught, and type of program services offered?

Yes	*79*
No	*-*
Unable to Ascertain	*8*

3.4 Do you have an evaluation system in place that feeds into the planning process?

Yes	*84*
No	*2*
Unable to Ascertain	*1*

3.5 Are activities which are implemented based on reviewed and revised program goals and objectives?

Yes	*82*
No	*2*
Unable to Ascertain	*3*

3.5.1 Do you have a plan which is reviewed and approved annually and consists of the following:

- ☐ Community needs assessment which includes, but is not limited to current demographics (community resources, trends, and projections);
- ☐ Student skill assessment (results of formal/informal assessment);
- ☐ Input and participation of staff, advisory group, and program participants;
- ☐ Documentation that appropriately trained and/or certificated staff are utilized for instruction;
- ☐ Annual review of facilities documenting compliance with local health and safety requirements;
- ☐ Review of an interface with district's school-to-work plan;
- ☐ Goals and objectives;
- ☐ Implementation plan; and
- ☐ Evaluation?

Yes	*74*
No	*4*
Unable to Ascertain	*9*

Indicator 4: The program utilizes curriculum and instruction techniques sensitive to individual student and group learning styles and the varying levels of student need.

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

4.1 Is student assessment information used to guide the goals and design of the of the instructional process?

Yes	*86*
No	*-*
Unable to Ascertain	*1*

4.1.1 Is a student portfolio which reflects student need used as a basis for instruction?

Yes	*85*
No	*-*
Unable to Ascertain	*2*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

4.2 Do you have a written curriculum guide outlining instructional content including materials, approaches and strategies to address the educational needs and goals of individual students?

Yes	*81*
No	*2*
Unable to Ascertain	*4*

4.2.1 Do you use the curriculum guide as a basis to address the educational needs and goals of individual students?

Yes	*84*
No	*2*
Unable to Ascertain	*1*

Indicator 5: The program has a staff development process that considers the specific needs of its staff, offers opportunities for training in the skills necessary to provide quality instruction and for the utilization of skills learned.

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

5.1 Do you have preservice and inservice staff development opportunities that include a program overview, philosophy and goals of the program, and ongoing topics appropriate to adult learning?

Yes	*83*
No	*1*
Unable to Ascertain	*3*

5.2 Do you have a process for identifying staff development needs?

Yes	*79*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*5*

5.3 Do you have effective staff performance assessment in place as measured by administrative observation of staff?

Yes	*83*
No	*1*
Unable to Ascertain	*3*

5.3.1 Do you have a staff development plan which is reviewed and approved annually and consists of the following:

- ☐ Needs assessment;
- ☐ Goals and objectives;
- ☐ Implementation plan;
- ☐ Budget and resources: and
- ☐ Evaluation?

Yes	*65*
No	*16*
Unable to Ascertain	*6*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

5.4 Do you have a record of the hours of preservice and inservice staff development training received by staff?

Yes	*63*
No	*14*
Unable to Ascertain	*10*

5.4.1 Do you have documented evidence of staff development activities and training (i.e. minutes, workshop agendas, attendance, records, etc.)?

Yes	*69*
No	*8*
Unable to Ascertain	*10*

Indicator 6: The program identifies support service needs and the agencies which address these needs, provides information to students as needed, and promotes student access to these agencies through informal linkages with service providers as a means of enhancing student participation in the program.

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

6.1 Do you have a process for identifying student support service needs?

Yes	*77*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*5*

6.1.1 Do you have documentation available which reflects and supports the need for student-driven requests?

Yes	*57*
No	*21*
Unable to Ascertain	*9*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

6.2 Do you have a listing of support service providers, or informal agreements or linkages between the program and support service providers?

Yes	*79*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*5*

6.2.1 Do you maintain a current and appropriate list of community services?

Yes	*80*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*4*

Indicator 7: The program recruits the population in their service delivery area as identified in the Adult Education Act as needing literacy services.

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

7.1 Do you have different types of recruitment activities available if the program is under subscribed?

Yes	*68*
No	*3*
Unable to Ascertain	*16*

7.1.1 Do you maintain and document outreach and recruiting activities appropriate to the target population?

Yes	*71*
No	*5*
Unable to Ascertain	*11*

Indicator 8: Students are encouraged to remain in the program long enough to meet their educational goal(s). The program has a plan which addresses retention and implements the plan as needed.

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

8.1 Do you have a written statement on the expected level of student participation and the measures or activities to be implemented if attrition is above stated acceptable levels?

Yes	*64*
No	*10*
Unable to Ascertain	*13*

8.1.1 Do you have evidence of the program's written policy concerning the expected level of participation and the procedures which will be implemented to address retention and or termination if anticipated levels are not satisfied?

Yes	*63*
No	*10*
Unable to Ascertain	*14*

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

8.2 Do you have evidence of the program implementation hours by the type of program?

Yes	*85*
No	*1*
Unable to Ascertain	*1*

8.2.1 Do you maintain records for students enrolled in ABE and ESL programs detailing their hours of participation in the program?

Yes	*87*
No	-
Unable to Ascertain	-

MEASURE OF PERFORMANCE

8.3 Do you have the number of students who continue or return to the program in the next program year?

Yes	*76*
No	*4*
Unable to Ascertain	*7*

8.3.1 Does your recruitment and intake process identify continuing or returning students?

Yes	*74*
No	*6*
Unable to Ascertain	*7*

Appendix C
Building State Performance Measurement, Reporting and Improvement Systems
National Institute for Literacy
June, 1995

A flexible framework for systemic reform is premised on an accountability system as a mechanism for focusing on the results of investments in literacy and improving returns on those investments. It is a powerful tool for systemic change--a guide for states just beginning the change process and a reinforcement for those states already on the way. It builds capacity in four specific areas within state literacy systems. Components of the system recommended by NALS are summarized below:

- Development of an accountability system focused on state and national goals aimed at providing a comprehensive literacy system aligned to larger state and federal human resource and economic development goals. This type of accountability system will allow for the measurement of progress toward goals requiring interagency cooperation, program collaboration, coordinated service delivery, and the integrated effort of all stakeholders in the system.

- Documentation of progress by measuring the outcomes of programs, not the program delivery process. Enrollment data and other inputs, while important, do not delineate impact of the program or describe the results of the program in terms of the differences in student's lives, such as the attainment of the GED, participation in the workforce, being able to attain a level of functional literacy to allow for participation in society or everyday family living.

- Development of a management information system which enables the state and other agencies to streamline reporting and share information. Centralized information about programs will make it possible for better planning and delivery of services especially in light of welfare reform and efforts to assist those on public assistance to participate in the world of work and in the national economy.

- Provision of a system for continuous improvement of adult education programs. The system would allow program directors to determine how well their program is achieving anticipated results and would provide effectiveness information to state policymakers. Program strengths and weaknesses could be identified and the state could then disseminate proven practice and discontinue ineffective practice.

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